



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

1263 f. 168

*A Companion to the Altar*



600090780U

1263 f. 168

---



A  
**COMPANION TO THE ALTAR:**

SHewing THE  
NATURE AND NECESSITY

OF A  
**SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

in order to our worthy receiving

**The Holy Communion,**

WHEREIN

THOSE FEARS AND SCRUPLES ABOUT EATING AND DRINKING  
UNWORTHILY, AND INCURRING OUR DAMNATION THEREBY,  
ARE PROVED GROUNDLESS AND UNWARRANTABLE.

To which are added,

**PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS**

SUITABLE TO A

**SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION,**

ACCORDING TO WHAT THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND REQUIRES  
FROM HER COMMUNICANTS.

---

I will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord, and so will I go to thine  
Altar.—PSALM xxvi. 6.

---

NEW EDITION.

---

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR C. J. G. & F. RIVINGTON,  
*Booksellers to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.*

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD,  
AND WATERLOO-PLACE, PALL-MALL.

1830.

---



GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,  
St. John's Square, London.

## COMPANION TO THE ALTAR.

---

ALL those blessings which we now enjoy, and hope hereafter to receive, from Almighty God, are purchased for us, and must be obtained, through the merits and intercession of the holy JESUS, who has "instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death and passion, to our great and endless comfort," *Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 24.* But then we must remember, that these benefits and blessings, which the Son of God has purchased us, are no where promised, but upon condition that we ourselves are first duly qualified for them. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a solemn ratification of our baptismal covenant, wherein God, for his part, hath faithfully promised "pardon and remission of sins to all true penitents;" and we, for our parts, are therein solemnly bound to be faithful and obedient unto him, *2 Tim. ii. 19.* Before then we can promise to ourselves any benefit or advantage from the participation of this solemn rite and covenant between God and us, we must endeavour (what in us lies) to possess our souls with all those divine qualifications which the sacrament of the Lord's Supper requires, to render us worthy partakers thereof.

And what those are, it is the design of this discourse to enquire; wherein I shall endeavour to shew what that *preparation* of heart and mind is, which must dispose us for a worthy participation of the blessed sacrament. And herein I hope to remove all those fears and scruples which arise in our minds about "eating and drinking unworthily, and of incurring our own damnation thereby," as

groundless and unwarrantable; and to do this, I will take occasion to explain that part of our CHURCH CATECHISM, designedly intended for our instruction, with relation to this duty of a sacramental preparation; namely,

Q. "What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper?"

A. "To examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life, have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and to be in charity with all men." This is that sacramental preparation which our Church (in as few words as possible) has provided for our companion or guide to the holy altar. The duty, then, of a devout communicant consists in these six following particulars: 1. Self-examination; *to examine themselves.* 2. Repentance towards God; *whether they repent them truly of their former sins.* 3. Holy purposes or resolutions of a new life; *stedfastly purposing to lead a new life.* 4. Faith in God's mercy through Christ, *to have a lively faith, &c.* 5. A thankful remembrance of his death. 6thly and lastly, Unfeigned love or charity for all mankind, *and to be in charity with all men.*

The first part then of a communicant's duty is self-examination: a duty not only enjoined by human authority, but likewise commanded by St. Paul: *but let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup,* 1 Cor. xi. 28. intimating, that no man should presume to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, without a previous preparation, if he meant to escape that same judgment or condemnation which these *Corinthians* brought upon themselves by their irreverent, sinful, and disorderly behaviour at this sacrament; and this was the occasion of St. Paul's caution and reproof: *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, says the Apostle, eateth and drinketh damnation \* to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body,* v. 29.

\* This word *damnation* does not signify eternal condemnation, but on the contrary, some temporal punishment or judgment (as you have it in the margin of your Bible), such as sickness or death, with which the city of *Corinth* was afflicted, for their great

But that our preparation may be so well performed by us, as to prevent the like danger, let us, as the wise man adviseth, *remember the end, and we shall never do amiss*, Eccl. vii. 16. *First*, then, That we may come to this heavenly feast holy, and adorned with the wedding garment, *Matt. xxii. 11.* we must search our hearts, and examine our consciences, not only till we see our sins, but until we hate them; and, instead of those filthy rags of our own righteousness, we must adorn our minds with pure and pious dispositions; *even that clean linen, the righteousness of the saints*, Rev. xix. 8. *2dly*, Another end or design of this strict preparation is, That we may be accepted by God as worthy communicants; that *he who knoweth the secrets of all our hearts, neither is there any creature that is not manifest to his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do*, Jer. xvii. 10. Heb. iv. 13. may approve of the sincerity of our repentance; and the king, who comes in to view the guests, *Matt. xxii. 11.* may (though strictly speaking we are not so) deem us worthy of his favour and countenance. And how to attain so great a blessing, the following instructions will help and assist us:

*First*, We are directed to *repent us truly of all our former sins*. This is that preparation which *Repentance*. Christ himself requires of us, *Matt. iii. 2, 3.*

A duty, you know, which our sinful lives make always necessary for our consideration, if ever we expect eternal happiness hereafter, *Luke xiii. 3.* But more especially the dignity of this sacrament requires that it should be inquired into with more than ordinary care and circumspection; because without sincere repentance we cannot expect any benefit or advantage from the death and passion of Christ, which in this sacrament we commemorate, and have the

abuse and profanation of this solemn institution; so that the sins here reprov'd (namely, gluttony, drunkenness and faction, ver. 18. 21, 22.) and the damnation here threatened, have no relation to us, unless it could be proved that any of us were ever guilty of the same wickedness with these *Corinthians*; which I believe no man ever was, or would be suffered to approach the Lord's Table after such a disorderly manner as they did, if men were so lewd and profane.

merits of it conveyed to us by this sacred memorial. Supposing then that this is sufficient to convince you of the necessity and importance of this duty; that upon it depends our welcome to this heavenly feast unto which we are called; I proceed now, in the second place, to inform you, that if your repentance or return to God be real and sincere, it will produce these following *good effects*:

*First*, "A sense, a sorrow, and confession of all our former sins. *Secondly*, a steadfast purpose or resolution to lead a new life." These are the genuine fruits of a true repentance, and must always accompany our return to God, if we hope to have it effectual to our salvation. And,

*First*, We must labour to get a *sense* or *sight* of all our former sins and wickedness; this will readily present itself to us by comparing our lives and actions with the rule or standard of God's word, which we must make the measure of our examination. St. Paul shews us, *Rom. iii. 20.* that by the law is the knowledge of sin: and our own experience will convince us, that there is no way more likely to discover our iniquities, and to humble ourselves for them, than a serious application of God's word to our crooked paths: And this duty of self-examination is never more properly applied to, than when we intend to receive the holy communion: For unless we see the number, and apprehend the heinousness of our offences, and fear the vengeance due unto us for them, we are altogether unfit for the commemoration of his death, *who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.* It is the sense and sight of sin that must shew us the need and necessity of a glorious Redeemer, and what obligations we are under to bless and praise God for our salvation by his Son JESUS CHRIST. The holy David recommends this practice of self-examination by his own example: *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.* Psalm cxix. 59. And this method, no doubt, is an admirable mean to improve us in virtue, and the most effectual way to keep our consciences awake, and to make us stand in awe of ourselves and afraid to sin, when we know, beforehand, that we must give so severe an account to ourselves of

every action. And when we are employing our minds in this duty of self-examination before the communion, or at any other time, we must discharge it as impartially as is possible for us, judging as severely of our own actions, as we would do of our greatest and worst enemy; or otherwise we should but flatter and deceive ourselves in a matter of the greatest weight and importance, namely, the knowing the state and condition of our souls: but if our enquiries are just and true, we shall then plainly discover wherein, and how often, we have gone astray and done amiss. We shall, by the faithful discharge of this duty, bring to light "all our ungodly, unjust, and uncharitable actions: all our vain and filthy speeches, all our wanton, proud, and covetous thoughts." Such a strict and impartial examination will discover to us that accursed thing sin, *Deut. vii. 26.* which has defiled our nature, made God our enemy, and will exclude us the kingdom of heaven, if not repented of, *1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.* But by such a severe scrutiny as this, we shall soon perceive the number of our transgressions, what vile wretches and grievous offenders we are, how often we have broken our most serious vows and resolutions, especially after the receiving the holy sacrament, and in times of sickness and distress: such a sight, and such a prospect of misery as this, should excite in us a trouble and sorrow for sin; especially if we cast an eye upon the final issue and consequences of it, with respect to the world to come. *Upon the ungodly, says holy David, God will rain snares, fire and brimstone, storm and tempest; this shall be their portion to drink, Psalm xi. 7. Great plagues remain for the ungodly: Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, Rom. ii. 8, 9. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God.* These, and many other such like texts of Scripture, may give us some idea or notion of the deplorable condition of the wicked in a future state, and of God's hatred against sin. And is not this then, without multiplying arguments, sufficient to affect us with great grief and sorrow, when we consider that so long as we live in a vicious course, so long are we exposed to all those plagues and torments which God hath in store for wicked men,

and will most certainly be their lot and portion, if not prevented by a timely repentance?

The SECOND part of a true repentance is *contrition*, or a sorrowful bewailing of our own sinfulness in thought, word, and deed. When we call to mind the sins and follies of our past lives, and the dangers we are likely to fall into, surely we cannot be otherwise affected than sensibly grieved with the thoughts and apprehensions of our present and approaching misery. The sorrows of *David*, and the repentance of *Peter*, 2 *Sam.* xii. *Luke* xxii. shewed themselves in floods of tears, and were too great to be confined within: But our hearts are generally so hard and unrelenting, that we sin against God, and lose our own souls without so much as a sigh or a tear. I know that the tempers of people are different; some can shed tears upon every slight occasion; and others cannot weep, though their hearts are ready to break for grief: and therefore we are not to judge of the sincerity of our own or other people's repentance by such signs and tokens; nor are tears always necessary to repentance, though they very well become us; and the least we can do when we have done amiss, is to be sorry for it, and to condemn our folly, and to be full of indignation and displeasure against ourselves. *I will declare my iniquity*, saith holy *David*, *and be sorry for my sin*, *Psal.* xxxviii. 18. Especially if we have been very wicked, and have multiplied our transgressions, and have continued long in any evil course, have neglected God, and have forgotten him days without number; then the measure of our sorrow must bear some proportion to the degrees of our sins; if they have been as *scarlet* and *crimson*, *Isa.* i. 18. that is, of a deeper dye than ordinary, then our sorrow must be as deep as our guilt; if not so great, we ought to shew as much trouble and contrition of spirit as to produce in us a penitential confession of all our former sins:

Which is the THIRD property of a sincere repentance. *I will acknowledge my sin unto thee*, says holy *David*, *and mine unrighteousness have I not hid. I said I will confess my sins unto the Lord, and so thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin*, *Psalm* xxxii. 5. Which confession of sin must not be in general terms only, that we are sinners with the

rest of mankind, but it must be a special declaration to God of all our most heinous sins, in *thought, word, and deed*, with their several aggravations, laying open our case to our heavenly Physician; and this we must do to shew that we condemn all our former evil and vicious courses, with a full purpose and resolution of mind (by God's assistance) never to do the like again. Unless this be done, our sorrow for sin, and the confession of our wickedness, can never profit us in the sight of God, if it be not joined with a firm resolution of leading a new life:

Which is the **FOURTH** and most essential part of a sincere repentance, and the only condition of finding mercy with God. *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy,* Prov. xxviii. 13. *Let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon,* Isa. lxv. 7. *I tell you nay, saith Christ, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,* Luke xiii. 3. *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,* Acts iii. 19. Those preceding parts of repentance before mentioned, are only preparative to this; that which must complete and finish the work of a new convert is, to become a *new creature*, "to turn from our evil ways, and to break off our sins by righteousness." This certainly must be the desire and intention of all communicants, if they hope or expect any benefit or advantage from this solemn rite or covenant; for he that comes with a design or intention of continuing in his former sins, comes somewhat like unto *Judas*, that came and received, and at the same time continued his resolution of betraying his Master. That which makes a man absolutely unfit to receive the holy sacrament, is the living in the constant and habitual practice of any known sin, without the least desire or intention of repentance or amendment. Such a man's approach to the holy table, no doubt, is to "eat and drink his own damnation," since it is a plain mocking of God, and a great contempt and abuse of his divine authority. We must therefore (by the help and assistance of God's grace) "resolve to lead a new life, following the commandments of God,"

or otherwise our former examinations will appear but slight and superficial, our sight and sense of sin trivial and indifferent, our sorrow and contrition of spirit forced and hypocritical, and our confessions odious and formal. Therefore examine well the sincerity of your repentance and resolutions, that you neither deceive God nor yourselves : him you cannot, because he is a *searcher of the heart, and a discernor of the thoughts*, nor will he accept of any thing which is not unfeigned.

Not that we are to suppose that this sacrament of the Lord's supper doth require perfect obedience in all our addresses to the holy altar, or that none must come but such as are in a sinless state of perfection: No; this were impossible, because "there is no man which liveth and sinneth not, for who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not a converting, but a confirming ordinance, intended to preserve and increase that spiritual *life and grace* which we received at our baptism: So that when we come to the holy communion, we come thither for fresh supplies of grace and goodness, "for the strengthening and refreshing of our souls in all holiness and virtue." As our natural bodies are fed and nourished with those elements of bread and wine, the same effect is wrought in the soul, in the inward man, by these holy mysteries, as in the outward man by bread and wine; bread being the staff of life, and wine the most sovereign cordial to cheer and rejoice the heart. And thus our souls, by this sacrament, are fortified and strengthened with grace, wisdom, courage, and all other spiritual gifts, to keep us through faith unto salvation. Both the comfort and benefit of it are great; the comfort of it, because it does not only represent to us the exceeding love of our Saviour, in giving his body to be broken, and his blood to be shed for us: but it likewise seals to us all those blessings and benefits which are purchased and procured for us by his death and passion; namely, the pardon of sin, and power against it. The benefit of frequent communion is also of great advantage, because hereby we are confirmed in all grace and goodness, and our resolutions to live in obedience and conformity to God's laws are *strengthened*; and the grace of God's Holy Spirit, to do

his will, is hereby conveyed to us : It is the sovereign remedy against all temptations, by mortifying our passions, and by spiritualizing our affections : In a word, it is the likeliest method to make our bodies the temples of the Holy Ghost, and to prepare our souls for the enjoyment of God to all eternity.

And if at any time, through ignorance, surprise, or the violence of any other temptation, we should fall into those very sins which we have repented of, and vowed against when we were at the last sacrament, yet these relapses should not make us afraid of coming again, since we have always the benefit of repentance allowed us : If after a relapse we repent, and renew our resolutions with a hearty grief and contrition of spirit, we are made whole as before. *If the wicked, saith God, will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him, Ezek. xviii. 21, 22. Sin no more, says our Saviour to the woman taken in adultery, and I will not condemn thee, John viii. 11.* It is not the commission of this or that great sin that will utterly exclude us from God's mercy and forgiveness ; for then, indeed, no person could escape damnation, because *there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not, Eccles. vii. 20.* But it is our living and dying without repentance and amendment, that brings God's wrath and vengeance upon us. His mercies are not limited ; and he will not only pardon us once or twice, but always upon our repentance and return to him. No time, no age or season, does he except against ; but *whenever the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive, Ezek. xviii. 27.*

Some people, I remember, have been very much concerned and discomposed at their devotions, upon the repetition of some few expressions, contained in the last exhortation to the communion ; namely, "Of being guilty of the body and blood of Christ our Saviour,—Of eating and drinking our own damnation,—not considering the Lord's Body,—Kindling God's wrath against us,—Provoking him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death." But such persons should bear

in mind, that these dangers are all avoided and escaped by coming worthily, that is, with *faith* and *repentance*. Therefore, let not these terrible expressions trouble you, or detain you from the holy communion. Repent and believe, and you are safe and secure from falling into any of those dangers which these sentences may seem to threaten you with. So that the want of preparation, as some men have alleged, and in the sense they generally take it, can never be a sufficient plea or pretence for their not coming to the holy communion; because, after our best and strictest endeavours to prepare ourselves, we profess, before God and the congregation, "That we do not come to this heavenly table trusting in our own righteousness, but in his manifold and great mercies." By these we are invited to come; and to the mercy of God, through Christ, all of us must flee and take sanctuary in; who has promised that *he will in no wise cast out those who come unto him*, John vi. 37. *A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*, Psalm li. 17. There is nothing dreadful in this sacrament, but to the wilful, impenitent, and persevering sinner, whose condition is dreadful, and every page in Scripture is terrible against such, whether they come or not; but to the penitent and humble soul, nothing is dismal or affrighting in this holy feast; for there are none condemned for unworthily receiving, but such as deserve it for continuing in their iniquities; and this impenitence renders even their prayers "an abomination to the Lord." Though they never partake of the body and blood of Christ, they are in equal danger with those who eat and drink unworthily; nay, I might say in greater, because the latter use the means in obedience to our Saviour's command, and the former wilfully neglect that which would prevent their damnation, if rightly considered and timely applied to. The surest way, I say, to prevent their damnation, is, to receive the sacrament more frequently than men usually do; that by a constant participation of this spiritual food of the living bread which comes down from heaven, their souls may be nourished in all goodness, and new supplies of God's grace and holy Spirit may be continually derived to them for the purifying of their hearts, and to enable them to run the ways of

God's commandments with more constancy and delight than they did before. So that the true consequence of eating and drinking unworthily, should rather excite our care and diligence in this duty, than delude us with false reasonings, to such a neglect as will certainly increase our damnation; it being certain that God will never cast any man into eternal flames for striving to do his duty as well as he can. *If there be first a willing mind*, saith the Apostle, *it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2 Cor. viii. 12. Neither ought we to think so unworthily of the Son of God, who came into the world *to save sinners*, that he would institute this ordinance to be a snare to entangle our souls with. It was not ordained for angels, or for glorified saints, but for humble and penitent sinners to bring them home to God, it being a seal of their pardon, and a refreshing declaration of our heavenly Father's readiness to forgive the chiefest of sinners for Jesus' sake, who graciously calls upon all who are *wearied and oppressed with the guilt and burthen of their sins, to come to him, and he will refresh them*, Matt. xi. 28. *Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*, Matt. ix. 13. And consequently such as account themselves most unworthy, are those very persons whom Christ doth here call and invite to this sacrament, when deeply sensible of their unworthiness. Were we not sinners, were we not *conceived and born in sin*, we should not need such means and instruments of grace as sacraments are; but, "being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." *They that are whole*, saith Christ, *have no need of a physician, but they that are sick*. This being the case of all mankind with respect to their spiritual life, there is no other way to free ourselves from this death of sin, but by speedily applying ourselves to our heavenly Physician, *who came into the world to seek and to save those who are lost*, and ready to perish; and the very sense of our own unworthiness is, of all other arguments, the best qualification to recommend us to God's favour and mercy, since we know that he resisteth the proud and presumptuous sinner, but never denies his grace and fa-

vour to the humble and meek. As often then as we come to the holy communion with such an honest and true heart, as to exercise our "repentance towards God," our faith and hope of his mercy, through Christ, for the forgiveness of our sins, and our love and charity for all mankind; such a temper and resolution of mind as this will, doubtless, render us worthy partakers of these holy mysteries, and prevent us "eating and drinking damnation to ourselves." Nay, I further add, that any person thus disposed or qualified, may come (if it should be required) at an hour's warning, as safely as he may come to Church and say his prayers, or hear a sermon. The due-ness of preparation doth not so much depend upon our setting aside so many extraordinary days for the forcing ourselves into a religious posture of mind, as upon the plain, natural frame and disposition of our souls, as they constantly stand inclined to virtue and goodness through the general course of our lives. From whence I infer, that a multitude of business, or a man's being deeply engaged in the public affairs of this world, cannot be any just plea or pretence for his not coming to the holy communion, because all business is consistent with the duties of religion, provided we govern our affairs by Christian principles: For though such men have not leisure for so much actual preparation, yet they may have that habitual preparation, upon which the great stress ought to be laid in this matter: Nay, even the conscientious discharge of a man's duty in his business, may be one of the best qualifications to recommend him to God, since every man serves God when he follows his calling with diligence, and observes justice and honesty in all his dealings; and consequently the greater danger and temptation he is exposed to through the multiplicity of business, the more need hath he of God's grace and assistance, which are abundantly communicated to us in this holy ordinance: So that men of business, if they have any serious thoughts of another world, ought more especially to lay hold on such opportunities which secure the salvation of their souls; for as they who have leisure ought to receive constantly, as the best improvement of their time; so they that are engaged in many worldly

affairs, ought to come the oftener to the holy communion, and learn how to sanctify their employments. But to proceed :

The other branch of a communicant's duty is, to "examine whether he have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ." *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5.; this sacrament of the Lord's Supper being only appointed for such believers as own their baptism, and profess the faith of Christ crucified, and understand the fundamental articles of the Christian religion contained in the Apostles' creed, and also the end and design of this holy institution. The benefit of our Saviour's death and passion in this sacrament are indeed freely offered unto all, but only effectually to believers. *As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe in his name*, John i. 12. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*, John xvii. 3. All that Christ hath done and suffered for us men and our salvation, can never profit us, unless we have faith to believe it : That which must render the benefits and blessings of the Gospel effectual to our salvation is our *faith* in Christ. *Verily I say unto you*, saith our Saviour, *he that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life*, John v. 24. The ancient Churches accounted those only *faithful* that had received the Lord's Supper; nor does our own Church allow that any of us should come to this Christian sacrifice without "the shield of faith." "Draw near with faith," says the priest, "and take this holy sacrament to your comfort." And this faith hath God's mercy, through Christ, for its object, as the fountain and foundation of all these infinite blessings and comforts which we gain by his manifestation in the flesh; and if we enquire into the cause and reason of so much mercy and goodness to mankind, no other can be given, but *the riches of his mercy*, Eph. ii. 4. And if we further enquire how this mercy becomes ours, the answer is plain—it was through Christ, by whom all the blessings of this life, and those of a better, are purchased for us, and must be obtained through the merits and intercession of the holy

Jesus. By him we were redeemed, "and, according to the riches of his grace, we have obtained remission of our sins, and through him, at last, we shall be glorified."

And to this *faith* we must join "a thankful remembrance of his death, and of those benefits which we receive thereby." Our *gracious and merciful Lord*, says holy *David*, *hath so done his marvellous works, that they ought to be had in remembrance*, Psalm cxi. 4. But especially this work of our redemption by Jesus Christ, which to forget, were an ingratitude baser and viler than ever heathens or publicans, the very worst of people among the Jews, were known to be guilty of towards their benefactors, Matt. v. 46. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*, 1 John iv. 10. This is a mercy far above all other mercies; nay, it is even this which sweetens all other mercies to us. Had there been no redemption, our creation had only made us capable of endless torments; and it had been better for us never to have been born, than to be born to inevitable ruin: which must have been our lot and portion, had not "the Son of God, by his own oblation of himself, once offered upon the cross, made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice and satisfaction to God for the sins of the whole world." The consequences of this redemption are so infinitely great and valuable, that it as much surpasses our understanding as it does our merits. We are to declare and publish to all the world, what God hath done to save mankind from that damnation which they had deserved, and to restore us again to that happiness and glory which we could never expect or hope to enjoy, had not Christ died for us. *O come hither and hearken, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul*, Psalm lxvi. 16. *Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thy infirmities; who saveth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness*, Psalm ciii. 1, 2, 3, 4. With what joy and thankfulness then should every good Christian commemorate this exceeding love of God, in the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ? This was the proper end and

design of this institution, to perpetuate this wonderful love of Christ, in laying down his life for us. *Do this in remembrance of me*, saith our Saviour, a little before his crucifixion; which being a solemn command of "our Master and only Saviour thus dying for us," we cannot refuse obedience hereunto, without being guilty of the most horrible ingratitude and contempt of his divine authority. He hath appointed it for a solemn commemoration of his great love to us, in laying down his life for us men, and for our salvation: and therefore he commands us to do it *in remembrance of him*: And St. Paul tells us, that *as often as we eat this bread, and drink this cup, we do shew forth the Lord's death till he come*. As for those men then amongst us, who profess themselves Christians, and hope for salvation by Jesus Christ, not to pay obedience to this his command, is a downright affront to his sacred Majesty; and he may justly upbraid us Christians, as he did once the Jews, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?* How unworthy are we of that salvation which he hath wrought for us, if we deny him so small a favour, such a reasonable request, as to commemorate his death and bitter passion once a month, or at least thrice a year, "who did humble himself even to the death of the cross, for us miserable sinners: who lay in darkness and in the shadow of death; that he might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life?" In this sacrament of the Lord's Supper we have the pardon and remission of all our sins, the grace and assistance of God's Holy Spirit, and the hopes of eternal life and happiness, freely offered unto us: And therefore had we no love, no regard, or reverence, to the dying words of our crucified Saviour, yet surely the consideration of our own present and future advantage might prevail with us to be more frequent at the Lord's table than we usually are.

Hitherto a communicant has been directed to set his heart right towards God; but this is not all, he must proceed farther and enquire how it stands towards his neighbour, since we are expressly forbidden, *Matt. v. 23, 24.* to offer up any gift or oblation to God, if our hearts are leavened with malice, hatred, or revenge. "If thou

*Our obligations to a frequent communion.*

bring thy gift unto the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Here you see that Christ prefers *mercy* before *sacrifice*. And it is generally agreed on by the ancient fathers, that these words of our Saviour do directly point at this sacrament, on purpose to oblige all communicants to forgive all manner of injuries, "before they presume to eat of that bread, or to drink of that cup." And it is expressly said, *Matt. vi. 14, 15.* that our prayers are not accepted, nor our pardon sealed in heaven, until such times as we *forgive men their trespasses*; and, to be sure, we can never be welcome or worthy guests at this heavenly feast, where Jesus the Saviour of penitents and the prince of peace is spiritually present, unless our repentance reconcile us to God, and our charity to all mankind.

And this charity of the heart, in forgiving injuries, must likewise shew itself by the hand, in relieving the wants and necessities of the poor. We read, that when this sacrament was administered in the Apostles' days, large collections of monies were then gathered for the maintenance of the poor. It was not determined how much every man should give, but all men were exhorted and enjoined to offer something, according to their ability; which if any neglected, the fathers censured them as unworthy communicants: and, to be sure, nothing within our power can so effectually recommend our prayers and devotions as charity; it being well observed, that our Saviour hath inclosed *prayer* between *alms* and *fasting*, *Matt. vi.* and therefore they are called its two wings, without which it will never fly so high as the throne of God. While *Cornelius* was fasting and praying, we read that an angel from heaven was dispatched to him with this happy message. *Thy prayers, and thine alms, are come up for a memorial before God, Acts x. 4.* He that hath *pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord: and that which he hath given will he pay him again, Prov. xix. 17.* Charge them that are rich in this world,—that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life,

1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19. But we may justly complain with *Basil*, that we know some who will "fast and pray, sigh and groan, yea, and do all acts of religion, which cost them nothing, but will not give one farthing to the poor: What benefit is there," saith he, "of all the rest of their devotions?"

And when the communicant has thus far advanced towards the altar, in his *examination, repentance*, &c. he must not forget another excellent preparative belonging to this duty of communicating worthily, which although it be not mentioned in our Church Catechism, yet it is always implied as a necessary part of our sacramental preparation, that is, *prayer*, private and public; a duty upon which all our present and future blessings depend, *Matt.* vii. 7, 8. and 21, 22. And so near a relation hath this duty of prayer with this sacrament, that all those blessings therein contained and promised, are only in return to our prayers; and no doubt but that man, who makes a conscientious practice of this duty in his closet, and at Church, can never be unprepared for this sacrament, nor want a title to God's peculiar favour and blessing: *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers*, 1 Pet. iii. 12. The constant exercise of *prayer* is the best method to get the mastery over all our evil inclinations and corrupt affections, and to overcome our vicious habits: It preserves a lively sense of God and religion in our minds, and fortifies us against those temptations that assault us: it spiritualises our nature, raises our souls above this world, and supports us under the troubles and calamities of this life, by sanctifying such afflictions: it leads us gradually to the perfection of a Christian life, and preserves that union between God and our souls, which feeds our spiritual life with grace and goodness: without it, we in vain pretend to discharge those Christian duties incumbent on us, or to prosper in our temporal affairs, which must have God's blessing to crown them with success. And as prayer in general has these great blessings and advantages attending it, so give me leave to suggest to you under this head, that those public prayers and devotions, which we offer unto God in our Churches, are not only more acceptable to him, but also much more edifying and advan-

tageous to ourselves: They cannot but be more acceptable to God, because thereby his honour and glory is much more considerably advanced and maintained in the world, than by our private devotions: By these outward *signs* and *tokens* we publicly declare to all the world that inward regard and esteem which we have for his divine perfections and goodness: Hereby we *let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven*, Matt. v. 16. There is no duty in Scripture more frequently commanded, none more earnestly pressed upon us, than this of public prayer. We have the example of all good men in all ages for it, and of Christ himself, who was daily in the temple and in the synagogues, and, no question, frequented those places at the usual hours of prayer, because then he had the fairest opportunity, from those public assemblies, to instruct, and to exhort to *faith* and *repentance*. *2dly*. We may expect greater blessings and success to our requests and desires, when we join in the public prayers of our Church, than from private, because our Saviour has, in a special manner, promised in such assemblies his immediate presence, that "where two or three are gathered together in his name, there will he be in the midst of them:" which he hath no where said of private prayer, though both are very good, nay, both are absolutely necessary for the beginning and ending of a Christian life: and it is a very bad sign of some evil principle or other, for any man to be such a stranger to the house of prayer, which is one of the greatest blessings and privileges (if we know how to value the same) that we can have in this world, and has always been accounted such among all wise and good men. It is certain that the *Turks*, whom we call infidels, go to their public devotions five times every day; and shall not they rise in judgment against us Christians, who cannot afford to go once or twice a day to God's house, when we have both leisure and opportunity! If men shall be judged for every idle word, to be sure, they shall not pass unpunished for all the neglects and omissions of their duty of this nature. But to proceed:

Besides this duty of *fervent prayer*, the communicant should spend some portion of time in reading and medi-

tation, to raise his soul into a devout and heavenly temper : The proper office of reading is to gain spiritual food and sustenance, and of meditation to digest it. Those divine subjects most proper for our serious contemplation on this solemn occasion, I think, are "our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount; the love of God in the salvation of sinners, through Jesus Christ; repentance, faith, charity, death, and judgment: the happy condition of a future state of blessedness, and the miserable condition of the damned in hell." These, and the like, as they offer themselves unto you, should be meditated upon, until some sorrow of mind, some ardour of devotion, some act of faith, some flame of love and charity, arise in your souls.

Thus have I briefly represented to you, both the nature and necessity of a *sacramental preparation*, which in a great measure contains the whole duty of a Christian's life: namely, "repentance towards God, faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and charity towards our neighbour." And I also hope, whosoever among us will but endeavour to prepare themselves for the holy communion, according to the preceding directions, may (by the help of God) upon all occasions come to the Lord's table, without the least fear or danger "of eating and drinking damnation to themselves."

Some people may, perhaps, censure this discourse, as giving too great liberty and encouragement to approach the Lord's table with less preparation than otherwise men would venture to do. But I know no ground or reason for any such suggestion, if they im-  
*The Church Catechism.*  
 partially consider the excellence and perfection of that guide and companion which I have followed throughout the whole : And to represent this duty of frequent communion otherwise than what the Church requires, is an injury both to God and to ourselves: And I dare affirm that no part of divine worship has suffered more on this account, than that of the holy communion : Thousands of people not daring, in all their life-time, (though very good livers,) to partake of the Lord's Supper, for fear of eating and drinking their own damnation.

# PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS

SUITABLE TO A

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION,

ACCORDING TO WHAT THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
REQUIRES FROM HER COMMUNICANTS.



*A Prayer to God for his gracious Assistance and Direction  
in our Sacramental Preparation.*

HOLY, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth ! Heaven and earth are full of thy majesty and of thy glory : I, the unworthiest of all creatures, do here, in all humility of soul and body, prostrate myself before thee, acknowledging my own weakness and insufficiency to do any thing that is good or well-pleasing in thysight ; and therefore humbly implore the special influence of thy grace and Holy Spirit, to further these my endeavours for a worthy participation of the holy communion of the body and blood of Christ, which he has commanded me to do in remembrance of him, and of those benefits which we receive thereby. Teach me, O Lord, the right way, and lead me in the paths of holy preparation, that I may be received as a worthy and welcome guest at this thy heavenly table. Possess my mind with a true sense of the greatness of this mystery, and the excellency of thy mercy in preparing this table for our spiritual food : inspire my soul with pure and pious dispositions ; and, instead of the filthy rags of my own righteousness, clothe me with

the righteousness of the saints, that my heart may be a clean, though homely, receptacle for my Saviour, and one day fitted for the blessed society of saints and angels in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Our Father, &c. See Psalms xxiii. xxvi. cxi.*

*A Prayer for the Gift and Grace of Repentance.*

"ALMIGHTY and eternal Lord God, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and hast more especially enjoined all those who compass thine altar, to wash their hands in innocency," vouchsafe me unfeigned repentance for my past sins, a hearty sorrow and contrition of spirit to lament my sinfulness, and most firm and stedfast purposes to lead a new life. It is the voice of thy wondrous goodness and mercy, that if "the wicked shall forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, thou wilt have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon him." O let thy goodness (whereof I have had so great a share, and plentiful experience) *lead me to repentance, not to be repented of*, that I may be a fit guest at thy Son's table! "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, and according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out all my transgressions for thy mercy's sake in Christ Jesus, the Son of thy love, whom thou hast set forth to be the propitiation for our sins." Grant this, O merciful Father, for the sake of my blessed Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

*See Psalms vi. xv. xxxii. xxxviii.*

*A Prayer before Self-Examination.*

"O LORD, thou that art the searcher of all our hearts, and a discernor of the very thoughts, and in whose sight all things are naked and open," be pleased to impart a

---

ray of thy heavenly light, to discover all the sins and infirmities of my past life, and whatsoever else thou knowest wherein I have done amiss, that henceforward no secret sin may lie undiscovered and corrupted in my soul; that by examining my life and conversation by thy law, the rule and measure of my duty, I may understand the true state and condition of my soul, and, from a just sense and sight of all my transgressions, through the assistance of thy grace and heavenly benediction, I may be enabled to reform my life, and to turn my feet unto thy testimonies; so faithfully to search and examine my own conscience, that I may come holy and clean to thy heavenly feast, and be received as a worthy partaker of that holy banquet, which thou hast called me to. Grant this for thy mercy's sake in Christ Jesus. *Amen.*

See *Psalm cxxxix.*

---

*Brief Heads of Self-Examination upon each Commandment.*

COMMANDMENT I.

THOUGH I have not atheistically denied the being of a God, or wickedly renounced him by apostacy, yet have I, not loved, desired, and delighted in other things more, than in God? Or, have I not feared men, and dreaded, the displeasure of the world more than of God? Or, have I not trusted in men, and relied upon the world, more than upon God? Have I not despaired of God's mercy? Or, by presuming too much upon it, encouraged myself in sin? Have I not been unthankful for mercies received? Or, have I not ascribed the glory and honour of what I now enjoy, to myself more than to God? (Say).

*God be merciful to me a sinner, and lay not this [or these] sins to my charge.* [Repeat the same at the end of every commandment.]

II. Though I have not worshipped God by images, yet have I not entertained gross and false conceptions of him? Or, have I not wilfully omitted coming to Church, or to the public prayers, when I had no just occasion to hinder me? Or, have I not rudely, irreverently, or wantonly behaved myself during the time of divine service? Or, have I not wilfully refused to come to the Lord's Supper, when I have been called to it? Or, have I not rashly and unadvisedly received the Sacrament without due preparation? Or, have I not broken my vows and resolutions which I then made?

III. If I have not openly blasphemed the name of God, yet have I not lightly or irreverently spoken of him? Or, have I not profanely jested upon, or abused his holy places or persons, or any thing else dedicated to his service? Or, have I not taken God's name in vain, by common swearing and cursing? Or, have I not taken false and unlawful oaths? Or, have I not broken my own vows and resolutions, especially my baptismal?

IV. Have I not neglected the worship of God on his Sabbaths? Have I not spent part thereof in vain sports, idle discourses, visits, and many other unnecessary affairs? Or, have I not suffered others to profane the Sabbath, when it was in my power to restrain them from so doing?

V. Have I not been stubborn, irreverent, and undutiful towards my parents, rejecting their counsels, despising their government, and coveting their estates before their death? Have I contributed towards their necessities when they were in want, and I had it in my power to help them? Or, have I not been disloyal to my prince, stubborn and unfaithful to my master, refractory and un-

*Comp. to the Altar.*

B

---

thankful to my minister, peevish and unkind to my friend and companion ?

VI. If I have not actually taken away the life of any person, yet have I not made my neighbour's life grievous by oppression, rage, and violence against him ? Or, have I not by fighting or quarrelling wounded his person ? Or, have I not tempted him, by any other vice or intemperance, to destroy his health, and so shorten his days ? Or, have I not by false or contumacious speeches wounded his good name and reputation ? Or, have I not, by my own luxury and intemperance in eating and drinking, been accessary to my own death ?

VII. If I have escaped the grosser acts of adultery and fornication, yet have I not conceived lust in my heart, and neglected the means to preserve my own and others' chastity ? Or, have I not by gluttony and drunkenness, or by any impure thoughts and words, defiled my soul ? Or, have I not accustomed myself to filthy talking, jesting, and unchaste behaviour in common conversation ?

VIII. If I have not been guilty of common and public stealing, yet have I been true and just in all my dealings ? Or, have I not contracted debts, when I was conscious to myself that I was not able to pay, or make restitution ? Or, have I not wasted my own or others' estates by riotous living ? Or, have I not by violence or oppression exacted of my inferiors, or by unlawful usury taken advantage of their necessities ?

IX. If I have not before the magistrates sworn falsely against any man, yet have I not accustomed myself to lying and slandering ? Or, have I not accused my neighbour unjustly ? Or, have I not concealed the truth of another, when justice and charity obliged me to give evidence of it ? Or, have I not unjustly sought to uphold my own credit, or to blast any other person's ?

X. Have I not secretly complained against the providence of God, as if others had too much, and I too little? Or, have I not, by unlawful means endeavoured to deprive others of their goods and prosperity? Or, have I laboured truly and faithfully to get my own living, and been content with that state of life unto which it hath pleased God to call me?

*A Penitential Confession of Sins: with an humble Supplication for Mercy and Forgiveness.*

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent; create and make in me a new and contrite heart, that I, worthily lamenting my sins, and acknowledging my wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Here call to mind all your most grievous sins.*

See *Psalms* vi. xxxii. xxxviii. li.

*An Act of Contrition.*

“FATHER, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.” Woe is me, O Lord, who was conceived and born in sin: the thoughts of my heart were inclined unto evil from my youth. Woe is me that I have sinned against thee, my Creator and kind Benefactor. Lord, I have done evil continually in thy sight, and my life hath been little else than one continual course of impiety, unthankfulness, and of unworthy returns for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to me. Woe is me that I should thus requite the Lord. O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a

fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for my sin! O gracious Lord, look on me as thou didst on the apostle St. Peter, and let thy compassionate look so pierce my stony heart, that I may weep bitterly for my sins, and may have that *godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of*: for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* xxv. xxxii. xxxviii.

*A Resolution to lead a new life.*

AND now, O Lord, I do not only with great shame and confusion of face confess and bewail the sinfulness and vanity of my own life; but I do stedfastly resolve and purpose (through the assistance of thy grace and Holy Spirit directing me) to "renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." Be pleased, O Lord, to strengthen and confirm all these good resolutions in me. And I heartily thank thee, O heavenly Father, for calling me to this state of salvation through Jesus Christ my Saviour, *who died for my sins, and rose again for my justification*; and I humbly beseech thee, for his sake, to give me grace to continue in the same unto my life's end. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* i. xxiii. xxiv. xxv. cxix. cxxvi.

*A Prayer for Faith in God's Mercy through Christ.*

ALMIGHTY GOD, our heavenly Father, who, for the greater confirmation of our faith and confidence in thy mercy, hast, in thy holy gospel declared, that *whosoever believeth in thy Son Jesus Christ, shall not perish, but have everlasting life*: and that *this is life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*:

increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in me, evermore. O let me not rest in a dead faith, but grant that I may have such a lively faith as will shew itself by love and good works; such a victorious faith, as may enable me to overcome the world, and conform me to the image of thy Son Jesus Christ, in whom I believe. O grant me such a due sense of thy infinite mercy, shewn to mankind in so much misery, as may never depart out of my mind.

I stedfastly believe, O blessed Jesus, that thou didst suffer upon the cross to save me and all the world from the guilt and punishment of our sins. O give me that grace, that I may die to sin, and rise again unto righteousness! Accept my imperfect sorrow, repentance, faith, and weak resolutions; and let thy precious merits, O my crucified Saviour, supply all my wants and imperfections. Thou hast said, *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are weary, and heavy laden, and I will refresh you.* O blessed Jesus, I come unto thee in all humility, and deeply sensible of my great unworthiness: O do thou bear this burthen of sin for me, and refresh me with comfortable hopes of thy mercy and forgiveness, and the truth of thy salvation, O gracious Lord! to whom (with the Father and the Holy Ghost) be all honour and glory for ever.  
*Amen.*

See *Psalms* lvii. *Eph.* ii. 6. 11.

*A thankful Remembrance of the Death of Christ.*

“ALMIGHTY GOD, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, and hast instituted and ordained holy mysteries as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death and

passion, to our great and endless comfort :” behold, I do most affectionately, and with all the powers of my soul and body, return my most hearty praise and thanksgiving for thy great mercy and tender compassion to me and all mankind, in sending thy only Son into the world, to redeem us from sin and misery, and, by his meritorious death and passion, to purchase for us eternal life. Grant, O Lord, that I may always most gratefully remember this exceeding love of my only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for me ; and work in me all such holy and heavenly affections, as may dispose my heart to be a worthy guest at thy holy table, prepared for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of those benefits which we receive thereby. “ Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thine infirmities ; who saveth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness.”

See *Psalms* ciii. 2, 3, 4.

*A Prayer for the Grace of Charity.*

“ O LORD, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth ; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into my heart that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace, and of all virtues, without which, whosoever liveth is accounted dead before thee ;” more especially when I am going to commemorate the unspeakable love of my blessed Saviour in dying for me, let not my heart be destitute of love towards my brethren ; extend thy mercy and forgiveness unto all my enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and turn their hearts ; which I as sincerely beg for them, as I hope for mercy and forgiveness at thy hands. Possess me with kindness and

good-will for all mankind, that my faith may work by love, and dispose my heart, according to my ability, to administer towards the wants and necessities of those who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate, and to do unto all men as I would they should do unto me; and give me that charity which covereth a multitude of sins, that, by doing good for evil, all men may know that I am thy disciple. Grant this for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* xv. xli. cxii. cxxxiii. *Matt.* xxv. 34. 41., xviii. 21. 1 *Cor.* xiii.

*A Prayer the Morning you intend to communicate.*

O most gracious and eternal Lord God, who hast called all such as are weary and heavy laden to come unto thee by faith and repentance, and thou wilt refresh them; in affiance on this thy gracious invitation, I will come to thy heavenly table, not trusting in my own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies; and although I am not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs that fall from thy table, yet, since it is thy property always to have mercy, I will not despair of a kind reception; forgive my want of a due preparation, and accept of my sincere desire to perform an acceptable service unto thee. Clothe me with the wedding-garment, even the graces of the gospel, and then I am sure I shall be a welcome guest at thy table, when I shall come thither in the likeness of thy Son Jesus Christ, in whom thou art well pleased. Possess my soul with a lively faith, profound humility, filial obedience, inflamed affection, and universal charity; that so I may become a worthy partaker of these holy mysteries, to my great and endless comfort. Grant this, O heavenly

Father, if it be thy blessed will, through Jesus Christ,  
*Amen. Our Father, &c.*

See *Psalms* xxxiii. xxv. xxvi.

---

*Short Prayers and Meditations before the Minister at  
Church begins the Communion Service.*

*At going up to the Altar.*

IN the multitude of thy mercies, O Lord God, do I now approach thine altar; O pardon my sins, and look not upon my unworthiness, (for I am a sinful creature, O Lord,) but upon those motives which drew me hither, even my own miseries, and thy tender mercies; therefore help me to supply in humility, what I want in worthiness, and let my bended knees and contrite heart shew that I durst not have ventured hither, had not thy mercy held out the golden sceptre, and said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you."

*At giving your Alms.*

O LORD, who didst not despise the widow's mite, accept of this little which I freely offer towards the relief of any of thy poor members. *Mark* xii. 42.

*When the Priest is setting in order the Elements to be consecrated.*

LOOK down, O Lord God from thy holy habitation, and from the glorious throne of thy kingdom, and sanctify us.

*When you receive the Bread.*

LOAD, I am not worthy of the crumbs which fall from thy table, and yet thou givest unto me the bread of life. Evermore give me this bread, that I may eat thereof, and not die eternally. *John vi. 34. 50.*

*After receiving the Bread.*

NOR unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the praise, for thy loving mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

*Before receiving the Cup.*

WHAT reward shall I give unto the Lord for all the benefits that he hath done unto me? I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

*After drinking.*

BLESSED be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his unspeakable gift, in whom we have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins.

*When you retire from the Altar.*

BLESS the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name; bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies. O let that heavenly food which thou hast so lately fed me with, transfuse new life and new vigour into my soul, and into the souls of all those who have been partakers with me of this holy communion, that our faith, hope, and charity, may daily increase, and that we may all grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen and Amen.*

See *Psalms* viii. xxiii. lxvi. ciii.



*Prayers and Meditations which may be joined to the former,  
where the Communion is large.*

*Aspirations for a devout Communicant.*

1. ENLIGHTEN, O Lord, the eyes of my understanding with the light of faith and wisdom, that I may ever look on thee, my Redeemer, as the way, the truth, and the life, which leadeth unto eternal life. What am I, Lord, and what is my father's house, that thou shouldst thus follow me with thy blessings? I was created by thee and of thee, and mayest thou ever be the comfort of my soul.—Holy Jesus, my hope and only refuge, I here render thee hearty thanks for all thy sufferings, and beg that I may find.

shelter in thy wounds against all enemies, ghostly and bodily : imprint the memory of them fast in my heart, that I may love thee, and in all my sufferings never want thy divine assistance, or forget what thou hast suffered for me. Take from me all self-love, and give me a perfect love of thee, that I may now be more faithful in my duty, and let nothing for the future put me out of my way : O that I could ever remember thee, think of thee, and delight in thee alone, and love thee only, who hast loved us, and washed us with thy most precious blood from the guilt of our sins. O that my senses may ever be shut against all vanity and sin, that my mind being free from all fruitless solicitude and fear, I may fix my heart there where true joys are only to be found. From henceforth I will seek unto thee my only good : my affections and desires shall be fixed on thee ; “ in whose presence there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”—My will I now resign into thy hands, desiring that thy will may be mine, both now and for evermore. Be thou my Instructor and Director in all things, that I may never do or speak, desire or think, any thing but what is according to thy good-will.

2. I AM thy servant, O Lord, O give me understanding according to thy word, that I may learn thy commandments, and lay aside all interest, beside that of heaven. O sweet Jesus, fountain of all goodness, guide my feet in thy paths, and teach me to do thy will : disengage my heart from all unprofitable solicitude and vain desires ; and though I live here upon earth, yet raise my affections to things above. How sweet, O Lord, is thy Spirit ! How pleasant to my lips are the words of thy mouth ! O that I could ever be mindful of them, to fulfil thy laws ! Make me to die daily to the world and all its vanities, and let the greatness of thy love make all that is earthly

appear as nothing to me. Protect me against mine enemies, and in all dangers appear in my defence : Make haste to help me, O Lord, and say unto my soul, *I am thy salvation.* Remember thou art my Redeemer, and have compassion on my poor distressed soul ; clothe it with all virtue, and feed it with thy grace, for it belongs to thee to take care of those whom thou hast redeemed. In thee I live, sweet Jesus, for thy sake I desire to die ; both living and dying, I will ever profess that thou art good, and that thy mercy endures for ever.

3. O THAT I could now give thee, O Lord, all that praise, glory, and honour, with which the angels and blessed spirits glorify thee in heaven ! But because I am unable to do this, accept at least my desire and good-will. Deliver me, O God, from every thing that is contrary to thy will, and be pleased so to dispose of my soul as may be for thy glory and honour. I surrender myself into thy hands, and entirely resolve to submit to that state of life thou shalt please to appoint me ; and if it be more for thy honour that I suffer, I cheerfully accept it ; *not my will, but thine be done.* Let nothing be now my comfort but thou, Lord Jesus, and nothing afflict me but my sins, and whatever else is displeasing to thy Divine Majesty. O blessed Jesus, life eternal, by whom I live, and without whom I die, grant that I may now be united to thee, and that in the embraces of thy holy love and divine will, I may rest for ever. When shall I see thee, O sweet Saviour, when shall I appear before thy face ; when shall I see thee in the land of the living ! Till then, I sigh and bewail my banishment, desiring to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.

If these *Ejaculations* are not sufficient until the Post-Communion begins, you may enlarge them, by reading more or less of the following places in Scripture, *viz.*

*For grace to love God's law, Psalms xix. cxix.*

*For a holy life, Psalm lxxxv.*

*For salvation and eternal joy, Psalms xvi. xxiv.*

*For assurance of God's care and protection, Psalm xxxvii.*

*For the comfort of God's Holy Spirit, Psalm xxxiv.*

*For the grace of humility, Psalm cxxxi.*

*For devotion in religion, Psalm xxvii.*

*Thanksgiving for God's mercies, Ps. ciii. cxxxvi. cxxxviii.*

*For pardon of sins, Psalms lxxxv. cvi. cxvi.*

*For redemption by Christ, Psalms xcvi. cxviii.*

*An Act of Thankfulness and Resolution before the Post-Communion begins.*

“PRAISE the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name;” for now I find the mercy, the peace, the comfort, and the grace, which flow from this fountain of spiritual communion with Christ: Let all the world know what he hath done for my soul: he hath rescued me, and many of these my poor brethren, from the nethermost hell: wherefore I will love thee, O holy Jesu! more than I can express, and live and die in that most holy religion which thou hast revealed to me. O let me never pollute that body, or defile that soul, which the Saviour of the world delights to dwell in. O let no oaths or lyings, back-bitings or slanderings, profane those lips, no obscenity or intemperance pollute that mouth, through which these holy symbols have so lately passed; for which fresh instance of thy mercy and goodness, I

will praise thy holy name, beseeching thee to keep me in this temper and resolution of mind, until *death is swallowed up in victory*: for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

*A Prayer against evil and perplexing Thoughts.*

"Go not far from me, O Lord, my God; make haste to help me," for corrupt imaginations are perpetually rising in my breast, and innumerable fears and sorrows close me in on every side. Be pleased, O gracious Lord, in this perplexity, to refresh my soul with some speedy comfort; scatter and disperse all these dark and sinful thoughts which haunt my soul, by shedding abroad the light of thy grace, into my heart; for in the extremity of my grief, this is my only hope and comfort, that I can take sanctuary in thy goodness, repose my confidence, and cast all my care and burthen on thee, who never failest them that call upon thee. Give me patience under these adversities, and a happy issue out of all these afflictions, both of body and mind. "Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and in misery: The sorrows of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of all my troubles: Look upon my adversity and misery, and forgive me all my sins. O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord." *Amen.*

See *Psalms* vi. cii. xxxiv. xlii. xliii.

*Upon Christmas-Day, and Seven Days after, you may add these to your other Devotions.*

I DESIRE, O Lord, to bless and praise thine infinite goodness, who didst take compassion upon mankind in their greatest misery, and hast provided so admirable a

remedy, by sending thy only begotten Son to recover our corrupt and degenerate nature, and by the purity of his doctrine, the example of his life, and the sacrifice of his death, to purchase eternal happiness for us. Grant, O Lord, that, through the assistance of thy grace and heavenly benediction, I may daily comply with those great things which thou hast done and designed for my salvation. Possess my soul with purity and piety, and all other Christian graces and virtues; that living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, I may hereafter dwell with thee, O Father of mercies, and God of all comforts, in those mansions of bliss and glory which thou hast prepared for them that love thee. *Amen.*

See *Psalm* xix. xlii. lxxxix.

*Easter-Day, and Seven Days after.*

**BLESSED JESUS**, who hast triumphed over the powers of darkness, and conquered hell and the grave, and who, by thy glorious resurrection, hast made known the power of thy Divinity, and proved thyself the true Messiah, keep me stedfast in this faith, and grant, that all the actions of my life may testify the reality and sincerity of my belief, by a suitable conversation; that I may rise from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness; that as I am buried with thee by baptism, I may henceforth mortify all my corrupt lusts and affections, and daily proceed in all virtue and godliness of living, that departing this life in thy faith and fear, I may have my perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting kingdom, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

See *Psalm* li. lvii. cxi.

---

*Whitsunday, and Six Days after.*

O LORD my God, who, by thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, hast promised the assistance of thy Holy Spirit to all that ask it of thee, I beseech thee always to direct my ways and actions, the thoughts and intentions of my heart, by the light of thy Holy Spirit. Let him be unto me a spirit of sanctification, to purify my corrupt nature; a spirit of counsel in all my difficulties; of direction in all my doubts, fears, and scruples; of courage in all my dangers; of constancy and consolation to me under all my persecutions and sufferings, especially in time of sickness and at the hour of death; that being governed and guided by his divine influence and direction, I may pass through all the changes and chances of this mortal life, till he bring me to everlasting life, there to reign with the ever-blessed and glorious Trinity, world without end.  
*Amen.*

See *Psalms* xxxiv. xlii. xliii. li.

*Trinity Sunday.*

GLORY be to thee, O God the Father, for creating me after thine own image, capable of loving thee, and enjoying thee eternally; for recovering me from a state of sin and misery, when I had lost and undone myself.—Glory be to thee, O God the Son, for undertaking the wonderful work of man's redemption, for rescuing me from the slavery of sin, and the dominion of Satan; for the accomplishing which miraculous work of our salvation, thou didst descend from heaven, and didst put on the form of a servant, live a miserable life, and die a painful and accursed death.—Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost,

for those miraculous gifts and graces thou didst bestow upon the apostles, and for those ordinary gifts, whereby sincere Christians, in all ages, are enabled to work out their salvation; for thy preventing and restraining grace, for the subduing our understandings and affections to the obedience of faith and godliness; for inspiring us with good thoughts, and kindling good desires in our souls; for assisting us in all the methods of procuring eternal happiness. Blessing and honour, thanksgiving and praise, more than I can express or conceive, be unto thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* ii. xlvii. lxxii. cx.

*After the Blessing, namely, The Peace of God.*

GRANT, O Lord, that we, and all thy faithful servants, who have this day been made partakers of the holy sacrament, may obtain remission of our sins, and be confirmed in piety towards God, and in charity towards our neighbour, and may be delivered from the power and temptation of Satan; and being filled with thy Spirit, may become worthy members of Christ's holy Church, and at last inherit eternal life, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

---

*A Thanksgiving after the Sacrament, to be said at Home.*

THOU, O my God, hast comforted my soul, thou hast strengthened and refreshed me with thy blessings, and rejoiced my heart with the tokens of thy love. How

---

transporting are thy comforts, and how ravishing the effects of thy goodness towards them that fear thee ! Thou hast treated a vile sinner at thy own table, and fed me with the bread that came down from heaven. In what am I better than those to whom thou dost not grant this favour ? It is not for my merits, but because thou wilt be glorified in doing good to the most unworthy, that thou hast this day made me a happy example of this thy free grace and bounty. Grant me this favour also, O my God, that through the whole course of my life, I may give thee praise and glory ; that the due sense of thy mercies may make me unfeignedly thankful ; and that my thankfulness may appear in a care to walk before thee in holiness, sobriety, and righteousness, all the days of my life.

*A Prayer in private after receiving the Holy Communion.*

O now plentiful is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast prepared for them that put their trust in thy mercy, even before the sons of men ! I praise and magnify thy great and glorious name, O Lord, for all those manifold mercies and comforts which thou hast bestowed upon me, ever since I was born. O Lord God, thou hast been my trust from my youth, by thee have I been holden up from the womb ; my praise shall continually be of thee ; but, above all, blessed, and for ever blessed be thy holy name, for the manifestation of thy Son Jesus Christ, the fountain and foundation of all our happiness, and for feeding me this day (who am unworthy of the least of all thy mercies) with the spiritual food of his most precious body and blood, to my great and endless comfort. Enable me, O Lord, through thy gracious assistance, to perform the conditions of that

sacramental covenant which I have this day so solemnly renewed and confirmed in thy presence, and at thy table; that through the strength and power of that heavenly food I have there been partaker of, I may daily grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and abound in every good word and work; and subdue in me all those inordinate lusts and corrupt affections which war against my soul; purify my mind from all evil thoughts, bad intentions, and evil designs; and suffer not pride, vain-glory, self-love, malice, hatred or revenge, or any other evil whatsoever, to reign in my mortal body; but do thou keep it for ever in the purpose of my heart, faithfully to fulfil my baptismal vows and resolutions, which I have now again renewed at thy holy table; that by persevering in all virtue and holiness of life, I may at length be an inheritor of that infinite happiness and glory which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*A Prayer in private for the Grace of Perseverance.*

HEAR most merciful Saviour, I humbly beseech thee, and let thy grace be ever assistant to all the endeavours and designs of thy weak and unworthy servant. I am not able of myself to do or think any thing that is good or well-pleasing in thy sight. O let thy Holy Spirit continually guard me against those numerous temptations which so strongly encounter me. Fix my inconstant mind, that I may not be led away with the errors of the wicked, and fall from my own steadfastness, but that I may persevere in good works unto the end. Moderate my affections and desires, and confine them only to such objects as are well-pleasing in thy sight. Let thy will be the sole guide and measure of mine, that all my hopes and wishes may centre in thee alone, and nothing may ever

---

appear desirable to me, in comparison of a pure heart and peaceable conscience : " Teach me thy way, O Lord, and I will walk in thy truth : O knit my heart unto thee, that I may fear thy name." Make me to love thee, as I ought, above all things, and let the interest of thy honour and glory be always dearer to me than gold and silver, or any other temporal advantage ; for thou, O Lord, art my portion, thou art my only rest, in thee alone is fulness of joy and true satisfaction, and without thee is misery and torment. O grant me this blessed retreat, this happy security, and then I shall find rest unto my soul, both here and hereafter. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* lxxxvi. cxix.

---

## MORNING PRAYER.

*PONDRE my words, O Lord, consider my meditation : my voice shalt thou hear betimes, O Lord : early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up, Psalm v. 1. 3. Almighty God, who, dwelling in the highest heavens, yet vouchsafest to regard the lowest creature here upon earth, I humbly adore thy sacred Majesty, and with all the powers of my soul and body do exalt and praise thy holy name for all the mercies and comforts of this life, and for the hopes and assurance of a better ; for protecting me from the evils and dangers of the night past, and for bringing me safely to the light of a new day ; continue this thy mercy and goodness to me ; and as thou hast awakened my body from sleep, so raise my soul from the death of sin, unto a life of righteousness. De-*

liver me, O God, from the evils of this day, and guide my feet in the paths of peace and holiness, and strengthen my resolutions to embrace all opportunities of doing good, and carefully to avoid all occasions of evil, especially those sins \* which by nature and inclination I am most likely to fall into : and when, through frailty, or the violence of any other temptation, I fall from my duty, do thou in mercy restore me again with a double portion of thy grace and Holy Spirit, to maintain a more vigorous defence against Satan and his devices. Shower down thy graces and blessings upon all my relations, [*on my father and mother, on my brethren and sisters,*] on all my friends, and give thy holy angels charge over them, to protect them from all sin and danger. Make me diligent in the duties of my calling, and that in all the changes and chances of this life, I may absolutely submit to thy Divine Providence. Let thy blessing be upon my actions, and let thy wisdom direct my intentions, that so the whole course of my life, and the principal designs of my heart, may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that which is righteous in thy sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

See *Psalms* iv. xvi. xxiii. lxxxvi.

*When you go out of your Chamber.*

THE blessing of God descend upon me and all belonging to me, and dwell in my heart for evermore ; and bless my going out and my coming in, now and for ever. *Amen.*

## EVENING PRAYER.

**LET** my prayer, O Lord, be set forth as incense, and the lifting up of my hands be as an evening sacrifice, Psalm cxli. 2. O Lord, our heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God, whose glory the heaven of heavens cannot contain, look down from the throne of thy majesty, and behold thy unworthy servant, prostrate before thy mercy-seat, humbly confessing unto thee the vanity and sinfulness of my whole life; especially the omissions of

\* *Here name particular sins and failings of the day.* my duty and commissions of sin \* this day wherewith I have so lately offended thine infinite Majesty and goodness, and so

grievously wounded my own soul; of these, and all other my transgressions, I most earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry for these my misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto me, the burden of them is intolerable: have mercy upon me, most merciful Father; for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake, forgive me all that is past, and accept of these my prayers and supplications, through the merits and mediation of the same, our Mediator and Redeemer. And although I am unworthy, through my manifold sins and iniquities, to offer unto thee any sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, yet I beseech thee to accept of this my bounden duty, with my unfeigned thanks for all thy goodness and

† *Here name particular blessings and mercies.* loving-kindness to me and all mankind †, purely proceeding from thy bounty, and wholly intended for my good, and particularly for preserving me this day in the

midst of so many dangers incident to my condition, and from so many calamities as are due to my sins. Thou art my Creator, O my God, and protector; thou art the ulti-

mate end of my being, and supreme perfection of my nature; under the shadow of thy wings is perpetual repose, and from the light of thy countenance flow eternal joy and felicity; to whom be glory and honour, world without end. *Amen.*

And thou, O Lord, by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice, bless our most gracious sovereign Lord King WILLIAM, and all the Royal Family; all my relations, friends, and kind bene-  
*\* Here name particular persons.*  
 factors\*; let thy providence succour them and theirs from all evil and danger, and do

thou reward them seven-fold into their bosom for all the good they have done or said of me. Be pleased likewise, O Lord, (in whose hands are the issues of life and death,) to succour, help, and comfort all that are in danger, necessity, and tribulation; all that labour under any bodily pain, sickness, or temptation†, or are dis-  
*† Especially those for whom our prayers are desired.*  
 turbed in mind; relieve such according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy

issue out of all their afflictions. Subdue in me the evil spirit of wrath and revenge, and dispose my heart patiently to bear reproaches and wrongs, and to be ready not only to forgive, but also to do good for evil, that all men may know that I am Christ's disciple. And finally, O Lord, since thou hast ordained the day to labour in, and the night to take our rest, as I praise thee for the mercies of the day, so I humbly beg the continuance of thy gracious protection over me this night. Let thy holy angels pitch their tents about my bed, that being safely delivered from all perils and dangers of this night, and comfortably refreshed with moderate sleep, I may be enabled to discharge the duties of my calling, and faithfully to persevere in holiness and pureness of living

**all the days of my life, to thy honour and glory, through  
our only mediator and advocate, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Our Father, &c.**

*When you lie down in your Bed.*

**I WILL** lay me down in peace, and take my rest, for it  
is thou, Lord, only, that makest me to dwell in safety;  
and into thy hands I recommend my spirit, my soul, and  
my body, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God  
of truth.



**THE END.**

---

**GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,  
St. John's Square, London.**







